1.1 The Rumpeltonian Reality Distortion Field (RRDF)

The Rumpeltonian Reality Distortion Field (RRDF) is a theoretical phenomenon first observed within the works of Ralph Rumpelton, in which recognizable subjects undergo a complete visual transformation while somehow becoming more recognizable than before.

Unlike ordinary distortion—which merely changes appearance—the RRDF preserves the essential identity of a subject while freely disregarding such trivial concerns as anatomy, perspective, proportion, symmetry, or the laws of Euclidean geometry.

Within the field, noses may expand to improbable dimensions, arms may stretch beyond practical use, eyes migrate to more expressive locations, and hair may become an independent architectural structure. Yet observers almost instantly identify the subject.

This paradox has puzzled fictional scholars for years.

The prevailing theory is that the RRDF strips away superficial visual information until only the subject's Iconic Essence™ remains. What survives is not an exact likeness, but the memory of a likeness—the version your brain remembers after years of seeing album covers, concert photos, and magazine spreads.

The strength of the field is measured in Rumpels (Rp):

- 1 Rp – Mild stylization. Friends say, "Nice painting."
- 5 Rp – Distinctive Rumpeltonian features begin to emerge.
- 10 Rp – Reality has been successfully negotiated.
- 20 Rp – Facial geometry becomes advisory rather than mandatory.
- 50 Rp – Viewers recognize the subject before questioning the anatomy.
- 100 Rp – Complete Rumpeltonian transcendence. Museum curators become nervous.

Researchers have noted that prolonged exposure to the RRDF causes curious side effects. Viewers often begin to see ordinary photographs

as strangely "under-Rumpeltonized," wondering why everyone's noses are so small and their heads so conventionally attached.

No known instrument can detect the field directly.

Its presence is confirmed only when someone looks at an MS Paint portrait with wildly impossible proportions and says:

"I don't know why... but that's definitely Bob Dylan."

Whether the Rumpeltonian Reality Distortion Field is a legitimate artistic phenomenon or merely an elaborate excuse for drawing very large noses remains one of the enduring mysteries of modern pixel aesthetics.

— Excerpt from the Journal of Advanced Rumpeltonian Studies, Vol. 3, Issue 1 (a publication with an extremely limited readership, but an excellent sense of humor).